

**ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION
NO. 96-1

OLYMPIC PIPE LINE COMPANY

CROSS CASCADE PIPE LINE
PROJECT

APPLICATION NO. 96-1

PREFILED TESTIMONY OF BRIAN
CARTER
EXHIBIT BC-T

ISSUE: GINKGO PETRIFIED
FOREST STATE PARK
SPONSOR: WASHINGTON STATE
PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION

Q. Please provide your name and business address to the Council.

A. My name is Brian Carter. My business address is Ginkgo State Park, P.O. Box 1203,
4511 Huntzinger Road, Vantage, WA 98950.

Q. Please summarize your educational and employment background.

A. I have a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Recreation and Park Administration from Eastern
Washington University, which I received in 1970. I also attended Wenatchee Valley
College for two years, from 1966 to 1968.

I am currently employed by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission as a
Park Ranger 5, and Area Manager of State Parks' Ginkgo Area. I have managed the
Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park for nearly 21 years.

1 I began my employment with State Parks on September 18, 1972, as a park Ranger 1 at
2 Deception Pass State Park . I Promoted to Park Manager 1 at Blake Island State Park in
3 August 1973, and promoted to Park Manager 2 at Illahee State Park in August 1977. In
4 September 1978, I promoted to Park Manager 3 at Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park.
5 This position was subsequently reallocated to Park Ranger 5/Area Manager. Areas under
6 my management are Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park, Wanapum Recreation Area,
7 Olmstead Place State Park, Iron Horse Trail – Kittitas Access, Helen McCabe State Park,
8 and Yakima Canyon Scenic Highway.

9
10 Prior to my employment with State Parks, I held several jobs, including employment in
11 apple orchards, a sawmill, the U.S. Forest Service as a fire fighter, gasoline service
12 stations, and as highway flagger.

13
14 **Q. Generally, what is the subject of your testimony?**

15 A. As the manager of Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park for nearly 21 years, I will provide a
16 general description of the park, how it is managed, and how it is used by the public. Next
17 I will describe the proposed pipeline route through the park, and will discuss my concerns
18 about potential impacts of the pipeline on park resources.

19
20 **Q. Describe Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park.**

21 A. Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park is a 7,500 acre park located both north and south of
22 Interstate 90 near milepost 136, near Vantage, Washington and on the west shore of the
23 Columbia River. The park was originally established in 1935, primarily in recognition of
24 and for the protection of the petrified wood within its boundaries.

1 In addition to the petrified wood, the park protects a shrub-steppe environment dominated
2 by sage brush and bunch grass, and which is habitat for a variety of wildlife. During my
3 years at the park, I have seen deer, rabbit, eagles, hawks, elk, coyote, snakes, lizards,
4 badger, raccoon, and porcupine. The arid to semi-arid climate with its minimal rainfall
5 and short growing seasons is characteristic of the shrub-steppe environment. Annual
6 precipitation to Ginkgo is usually about 7 inches.

7
8 The Park has three special management areas--Wanapum Recreation Area, Ginkgo
9 Heritage Area, and the Natural Area--with the unclassified balance comprising the
10 remainder of the park. The Wanapum Recreation Area is the most developed portion of
11 the park. It contains a fifty-campsite, full hook-up campground, picnic areas, a boat
12 launch, parking facilities, a ranger residence, a maintenance shop, a park office, a public
13 contact station, and restrooms.

14
15 The Ginkgo Heritage Area has an interpretive center, picnic areas, parking facilities, a
16 ranger residence, and a garage/shop. The residence, garage/shop structure, and part of the
17 interpretive center were constructed in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps,
18 and are historically significant.

19
20 The Natural Area contains limited development, with about three miles of interpretive
21 trails with protected displays of partially excavated petrified wood, and about twenty-two
22 miles of fire roads which also serve as hiking trails.

23
24 The remainder of the park (approximately 7,000 acres) is not specially classified but is
25 general park land and undeveloped. I have attached as Exhibit BC-1 to my testimony a
26

1 map entitled Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park Boundary Map. This map accurately
2 shows the park boundaries and the three management areas contained within the park.
3

4 **Q. For what values is the park managed?**

5 A. The Park is managed for a variety of values, including interpretation, recreation, and
6 preservation. Developed areas within the park are available for public recreation,
7 including picnicking, camping, hiking, scenic viewing, and other outdoor-related
8 activities. The remainder of the Park is managed for its scenery, habitat, and petrified
9 wood holdings. About 4,000 acres of the park are leased for cattle grazing, primarily for
10 fire control. The remaining undeveloped acreage is managed untouched as much as
11 possible, with the exception of control of noxious weeds, to preserve the petrified wood
12 resource and to preserve undeveloped areas as habitat in their natural state. No hunting
13 or petrified wood collecting is allowed within the park. The Ginkgo Interpretive Center is
14 available for the public to view the petrified wood specimens and learn of the geologic
15 history and geologic significance of the area. The interpretive trails are available for
16 public viewing of the petrified wood in its natural state.
17

18 **Q. How are these parks utilized by the public?**

19 A. The Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park is a very popular park. Total visitation was
20 586,026 for 1997, the most recent year for which we have statistics. The public's primary
21 recreation use of the park is picnicking and hiking. However, the Wanapum Recreation
22 Area within Ginkgo is also utilized for camping, swimming, and water access. 1997
23 overnight camping attendance at Wanapum was 22,538.
24

25 The Ginkgo Interpretive Center is visited by a wide variety of individuals and groups to
26 view petrified wood specimens and learn the geologic history of the area. 1997 visitation

1 to the Interpretive Center was 32,896. About 50 groups, annually, schedule guided tours
2 through the Interpretive Center. These groups include grade and high school classes,
3 college and university classes, and senior citizens. In addition, many groups drop in
4 during scheduled operation days of the Interpretive Center and self-guide similar to the
5 general public.

6
7 Over the years, a number of scientific studies of geological, ecological, and recreational
8 aspects of Ginkgo have been conducted by college faculty and students, writers and other
9 individuals. Student interns and others have utilized the Park for a variety of practicum
10 and other studies.

11
12 **Q. What is the “Ginkgo Petrified Forest?”**

13 A. The Ginkgo Petrified Forest is an area of both exposed and buried petrified wood and
14 logs. The area is significant both in terms of the quantity of petrified wood and the
15 variety of petrified trees represented. The resource was discovered in the 1930’s.
16 Professor George Beck of the state college in Ellensburg (now Central Washington
17 University) is credited with publicizing the importance of this resource. While there were
18 early discussions concerning designating the forest as a national park, it was ultimately
19 set aside by the Washington legislature as a state park in 1935.

20
21 The park was named after the ginkgo tree and attests to the significance of finding
22 petrified ginkgo within the Park. It is one of the few known places in the world where
23 ginkgo wood has been found petrified. Although the name focuses on the ginkgo tree, the
24 park contains many species of petrified trees, ranging from water tupelo and gum to
25 spruce, hemlock and oak.

1 The Ginkgo Petrified Forest is known for its geologic uniqueness and significance. In
2 fact, petrified wood is the official Washington State Gem, pursuant to RCW 1.20.090.
3 The National Park Service considered the petrified wood resource at Ginkgo significant
4 enough to designate the park as a National Natural Landmark. Unfortunately, my
5 understanding is that due to the Olympic Pipeline proposal, the National Park Service has
6 listed Ginkgo's National Natural Landmark status as threatened.

7
8 I have included as Exhibit BC-2 to my testimony a copy of the recently completed Trees
9 of Stone video, which I co-produced for State Parks. This video demonstrates the
10 significance of the Ginkgo Petrified Forest. We produced it as a project to upgrade our
11 current video for public viewing at the Ginkgo Interpretive Center, and for marketing to
12 the public. This new video will be shown and sold at the Interpretive Center during the
13 1999 operating season.

14
15 **Q. Are you familiar with the proposal by the Applicant in this proceeding, Olympic**
16 **Pipeline Company, to construct a petroleum pipeline through the park?**

17 A. Yes. I have reviewed Olympic Pipeline Company's original and revised Application for
18 an Easement submitted to State Parks, its Revised Application to EFSEC, as well as the
19 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Cross Cascade Pipeline. I have also
20 watched a video provided by Olympic depicting their construction methodology, and a
21 fly-over video of the route. Additionally, I have met several times with various Olympic
22 staff to discuss the proposal and route. Olympic surveyed and marked through Ginkgo a
23 proposed specific route, and I have walked and inspected this entire route.

24
25 **Q. Please provide a description of the route as the proposed pipeline traverses the park.**
26

1 A. The route I will describe is the route surveyed and marked by Olympic Pipeline
2 Company. This route traverses mostly the unclassified, undeveloped portion of the park,
3 and is also shown on Exhibit BC-1.

4
5 The route begins at the western boundary of the park between the Old Vantage Highway
6 (formerly highway 10) and Interstate 90. The proposed route would enter the park near
7 the SW corner of section 23 and the NW corner of section 26, Township 17 North, Range
8 22 East.

9
10 From this area the route travels in a southeasterly direction through the northern half of
11 section 26 and into the western portion of section 25, where it turns more southerly and
12 crosses under Interstate 90 and then continues southeasterly through the remainder of
13 section 25.

14
15 The route continues into and southerly through the eastern portion of section 36 and the
16 southwest corner of section 31.

17
18 From section 31, the route proceeds through the western portion of section 6 Township
19 16 North, Range 22 East.

20
21 The route leaves the park at the southern edge of section 6, a total distance of about five
22 miles through Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park.

23
24 **Q. Do you believe that the pipeline, as proposed, would have adverse environmental**
25 **impacts on the park?**
26

1 A. Yes. As you can see from Exhibit BC-1, the proposed route bisects the undeveloped area
2 of the park. I am concerned that pieces and logs of petrified wood would be unearthed
3 during excavation of the pipeline ditch. In walking the proposed route, I have noticed a
4 number of areas with small pieces of petrified wood on the ground surface. This is a
5 good indication of subsurface petrified wood deposits. I also stepped on the end of a
6 petrified log or a large piece of petrified wood along the route. While excavation would
7 be required to determine whether this was an entire log or simply a large piece of petrified
8 wood, the point is that I have no doubt that excavation for the pipeline will result in
9 unearthing petrified wood deposits.

10
11 Scarring from the pipeline construction would occur along the route due to disruption of
12 ground cover. This scarring would likely be noticeable by travelers on Interstate 90
13 where it passes through the park and from view sheds along Huntzinger road, Wanapum
14 Recreation Area, Interstate 90 on the Eastside of the Columbia River, and the scenic
15 overlook on the Eastside of the Columbia River. As I mentioned, the area only receives
16 about seven inches of rainfall per year, and vegetation recovery is an extremely slow
17 process. It may be possible to reduce the visual impact of the scarring by making minor
18 adjustments to the proposed route, and State Parks has discussed several such micro-
19 siting adjustments with OPL. However, the route could not be entirely removed from all
20 view sheds.

21 DATED this _____ day of February, 1999.

22
23
24 BRIAN CARTER
25
26